ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

THRILLER

The Mountain Place of Knowledge
Marshall Chamberlain
The Grace Publishing Group
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Three Stars (out of Five)

Vivid word pictures allow readers to live vicariously through the eyes of the main character.

The Mountain Place of Knowledge is the first book in a series that shows high potential for expansion. Built on a strong concept, the story features a Mayan diary and a burial chamber, the unexplained death of a UN official, and telepathic communication. This unusual thriller gathers an eccentric cast of characters to solve a mystery and follow a blurry gateway to a dimension that few realize exists.

Hidden in the mountains of Belize is a secret place that no one can fathom. Knowledge and influence—remnants of an ancient realm beyond modern humans' comprehension—explode from the depths of a supernatural fortress with the power to heal or destroy. Tools that can alter the course of mankind are there for the taking. Dangerous to the disreputable and the greedy yet welcoming to the sincere at heart, this baffling stronghold beckons. Political control may rest with the decisions of a few and their ability to access the wisdom of the past.

Unfortunately, a slow start and a lack of clarity inhibit the progression of this story, dissipating reader anticipation for an action-filled adventure. Still, this novel is a worthwhile endeavor. Questions arise throughout, generating sufficient interest to hold an audience, even if concrete activity does not always follow to advance the plot.

Instead of leading at a breakneck pace, conversations and descriptions read like a prolonged investigation. Vivid word pictures enhance the most horrific situations, allowing readers to live vicariously through the eyes of a main character: "The bodies were un-naturally disjointed like overdone spaghetti, and hideous head wounds gaped against black-and-blue bruising. He turned away gagging, staggered to the edge of the trees, and latched on to the nearest tree trunk to retch."

In the following scene, the terror is internal rather than external: "The pain subsided, but

she felt empty inside, devoid of enthusiasm. The lingering clarity and intensity of the dream made her feel small and insignificant, and her heart pounded remembering how it felt to suffocate."

These kick-start impressions infuse the book with life, propelling the reader through its pages. As the story leads into the second installment of the Ancestor series, comprehensive explanations remain just out of reach, forcing one to keep reading.

An outspoken proponent for self-publishing, Marshall Chamberlain is the author of two novels and a publishing manual. Lovers of the Indiana Jones movies will enjoy the work of this promising author.

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